



EXPERIENCES AND STRUGGLES OF GRADE 4 PUPILS IN READING: BASIS FOR ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

Maricel M. Roldan

Graduate School, Bataan Peninsula State
University, Balanga Campus, Bataan,
Philippines
maricel.manalili@deped.gov.ph

Ronaldo A. Punla

¹Graduate School, Bataan Peninsula State
University, City of Balanga, Bataan,
Philippines

Lenis Aislinn C. Separa

Student and Scholarly Services, University of
Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

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Abstract

This qualitative study aims to describe the experiences and struggles of Grade 4 pupils in reading at Renato L. Cayetano Memorial School during the School Year 2024-2025, serving as the foundation for a proposed enhancement program. Using narrative inquiry within a descriptive qualitative research design, the study captured the lived experiences of pupils identified as frustrated readers through the Phil-IRI evaluation. Data were collected through interviews and focus group discussions and analyzed using manual coding and thematic narrative analysis. Findings revealed that pupils lack reading support at home, have limited access to reading materials, and minimal parental involvement due to socioeconomic constraints and time limitations. The absence of a consistent reading buddy often leads to helplessness and disengagement. Pupils' difficulties with letter-sound recognition, word decoding, and reading comprehension significantly impacted their academic confidence and motivation. Based on these insights, the study proposes an enhancement program that aims to foster an engaging, compassionate, and inclusive reading culture supported by teachers, families, and the community. Volunteer Reading Mentorship Program, Mobile Libraries, Parental Workshops, Teachers' Training, and interactive Reading Camps are the proposed initiatives.

Keywords: enhancement program, qualitative research, parental involvement, reading struggles

Introduction

Understanding signs and symbols in reading is an essential skill that helps pupils understand the words, think, communicate, and grasp ideas better. As a means of learning new information on vocabulary, reading is vital to pupils' development. When pupils find reading enjoyable, they can ignite their own creativity and reduce stress levels. Having these advantages, pupils could get from reading, and teachers would want to help pupils, especially younger pupils, to appreciate reading and become good readers.

The need for action in addressing the reading needs of pupils has been documented in various previous works. Pupils had trouble finding and using important information from different sources, like textbooks and academic articles (Phakiti & Li, 2017). These struggles can lead to lower academic achievement as pupils may not fully understand the materials, resulting in lower class participation, frustration, and low self-confidence. In the U.S., 65% of fourth graders have reading proficiencies at or below the primary level National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the same situation is concerning. In the U.K., a staggering 20% of pupils in England are unable to acquire reading skills by the time they reach the age of 11 (English Helper, 2022).

Reading difficulties as an issue of concern have also been reported in different organizations. In 2020, UNESCO noted that the number of pupils with reading difficulties increased from 460 million to 584 million. Lockdowns that led to school closures, diversions, and a scarcity of reading resources were seen to have contributed to pupils' declining reading habits. In the Philippines, UNICEF (2022) reported that around 15% of pupils cannot read straightforward texts. Like the findings of UNESCO (2020), this reading difficulty is attributed to the longest school closure in over seventy weeks during the COVID-19 pandemic (Macalintal, 2023).

Several studies show the association of low reading levels with low literacy levels. The Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (2019) revealed that only 10% of Grade 5 Filipino students achieved the required reading competency level, while over 25% of Filipino pupils have the lowest reading literacy proficiency levels.

In the December 2022 Programme for International Students Assessment (PISA) exam, the Philippines scored 347, ranking 77th out of 81 participating countries, which indicates a lower-than-average reading level among students. The increasing number of poor readers and nonreaders in elementary school is evident in the country (Deluao et al., 2022) is considered an alarming situation in the Philippine education system (Diton & Rico, 2021). In Bataan, Philippines, 5,153 out of 13,551 pupils, or 38% are found to be frustrated readers in the pretest in the October 2023 PHIL-IRI Reading. Meanwhile, frustrated readers make up 1,397 out of 2,521, or 55% of Grade 4 pupils in Mariveles District, and 7 out of 52, or 13% Grade 4 pupils in Renato L. Cayetano Memorial School during the 2024 PHIL-IRI pretest.

The theoretical underpinning of this study can be traced to previous works that explain how reading development is shaped by home, school, and the environment: Epstein's theory of parental involvement, Clay's emergent literacy theory, and Bronfenbrenner's

ecological systems theory. These works collectively. Epstein's theory emphasizes the crucial role of parents as active partners in their children's literacy development through effective parenting, communication, volunteering, decision-making, and community engagement. Clay's theory emphasizes that literacy begins in early everyday experiences with print and language, making early exposure and meaningful interaction essential to later reading success. Bronfenbrenner's theory underscores that a child's reading development is influenced by interconnected systems, particularly the family, school, and community. These works provide a foundation for the need to conceptualize reading enhancement programs that address the reading challenges of pupils.

Reading enhancement programs aim to address the growing literacy crisis among pupils. They play a crucial role in improving pupils' reading skills through interventions that help frustrated readers catch up, offer training to teachers and parents, and create a conducive reading environment. Readers who participate in enhancement programs score higher, read regularly, and have stronger comprehension skills (OECD, 2020). Thus, this study aims to investigate the reading experiences of Grade 4 Pupils at Renato L. Cayetano Memorial School during the School Year 2024-2025 and to propose relevant reading enhancement programs that could address the identified reading challenges.

Methods

Methods and Techniques of the Study

This study used narrative inquiry to solicit information on the accounts of students and parents at Renato L. Cayetano Memorial School on their reading experiences at home. Narrative inquiry focuses on the personal story, personal experiences, and how individuals design and express their lives through storytelling (Clandinin & Connelly, 2019).

Through the narratives of students and parents, this study targets the identification of the reading challenges perceived by both students and their parents when learning how to read at home and intends to propose reading programs that could enhance reading outcomes.

This study employed purposive sampling, a type of sampling process that selects examples and gathers information aligned with the goals and objectives of the study (Bryman, 2014). Specific inclusion criteria for parent participants were set based on the objectives of the study, wherein a variety of age groups and genders were considered. Parents or guardians must have children enrolled for the School Year 2024-2025, be of legal age, understand the purpose of the study, and voluntarily agree to participate.

Meanwhile, student participants were selected based on the following criteria: (1) enrolled in Grade 4 in School Year 2024-2025, (2) at least 9 years old; and (3) belong to the "frustrated level" based on the PHIL-IRI evaluation results. Those students classified under the frustrated level are those who scored 89% and below in word recognition and scored 58% and below in comprehension. Seven students fit this criteria and were selected as participants. All participants had the right to withdraw from the study if they felt uncomfortable without facing legal impediments among teachers, pupils, and parents.

Procedures

Permits to conduct research and interviews were secured from the School Division Office of Bataan, the Mariveles District Supervisor, the administrative officials of Renato Cayetano Elementary School, and the parents of the participants before data collection. Participants were then consulted on their availability for an interview through text messages, emails, messenger chats, and in-person visits in the preferred locations of the participants.

Pilot interviews with pupils were conducted on campus while ensuring that no pupil missed any class.

Before recording the interviews, consent was solicited from participants. Audio recordings were stored in a password-protected mobile phone, while the transcription of interviews was saved in a password-protected computer. All stored data will be deleted from the mobile phone and computer storage.

Analysis

Thematic narrative analysis, a method of analyzing narrative data that focuses on identifying, analyzing, and interpreting themes within stories while still preserving the structure and context of those stories, was performed to analyze the data from interviews.

Data were organized through manual coding, where responses were initially categorized then then analyzed based on emerging and derived themes from the narrative analysis.

Results and Discussion

Experiences of Pupils with Reading Difficulties at Home

Home Reading Setting refers to the environment and practices within a home that influence a pupil's reading habits, skills, and overall development. This setting includes physical aspects such as books and reading materials. Likewise, it includes pupils' attitudes towards reading and family members' involvement in fostering a love of reading.

Weakened Roots of Support

A lack of a Reading Buddy can negatively affect pupils' reading development, especially for those who struggle with comprehension and fluency. However, pupils can struggle to participate in reading exercises, which hinders confidence-building and the development of vital literacy skills. This lack of structure points out the necessity of formally structured interventions, such as a Reading Buddy program, for helping students develop a love of reading while promoting their academic achievement and overall learning experience. Pupils must acquire reading skills at home. Alternatively, they have a reading tutor at home. A conducive home environment is essential for reading; family members are crucial in assisting and fostering young readers' literacy abilities. With this support, they can develop and improve their reading skills and develop a lifelong love of reading and learning. When

the participants were asked who had read or read to them at home, Participants 3, 4, and 7 claimed that no one was reading with them at home.

Participant 3 said, *"Minsan si Mama busy sa work kaya wala na din ako kasama nag babasa si ate naman may pasok din"* (Sometimes, Mama is busy with work, I don't have anyone to read with. My older sister has school too).

Participant 4 added, *"Lagi lang ako mag-isa sa bahay, wala pong nagbabasa sakin, busy si mama sa trabaho, si papa naman may pasok. Tapos mga kapatid ko maliliit pa po."* (I'm always alone at home. No one reads with me. My mother is busy working; my father is also working. My siblings are still very young).

Participant 7 stated. *"Ako lang po nagbabasa sa Maam sa bahay, si Mama ko po kasi nag-aalaga ng kapatid kong maysakit kaya di nya po ako natuturuan"* (I am the only one who reads at home, Ma'am. My mother takes care of my sick sibling, so she can't teach me.)

Lopez and Valdez (2021) examine the role of family members as reading partners and the consequences of such a relationship on young readers' skills and attitudes toward reading. More concretely, their study concludes that a child who regularly reads with a family member has improved reading fluency, comprehension, and attitude toward reading. The reason for this effect is associated with the fact that family members can give personalized attention and encouragement, thus supporting the creation of a stimulating and engaging reading atmosphere at home.

Participants 1, 5, and 6 said that their older siblings were their reading companions, but not frequently.

"Minsan kasama ko si ate mag basa kasi po si Mama busy mag-alaga ng mga kapatid ko." (Sometimes, I read with my older sister, because my mother is busy taking care of my younger siblings), Participant 1 responded.

Participant 5 added, *"Si mama nagtuturo sakin lalo na po pag wala na syang ginagawa kaso minsan lang din po eh"* (My mother teaches me, especially when she's not busy, but that only happens occasionally).

Similarly, Participant 6 mentioned, *"Kasama ko si ate magbasa minsan kaya lang hindi din sya gamoon kagaling magturo kasi grade 7 palang sya."* (I sometimes read with my sister, but she is not good at teaching reading since she's only in grade 7).

This result conforms with Chen and Wang (2023). Reading behavior modeling advocates maintain that when children have parents or older siblings as reading companions, these companions model the reading behavior; that is, the child perceives reading as essential and pleasurable. Children will then be willing to engage in reading activities more frequently,

be more interested in reading, and eventually show improved literacy achievement. It concluded that family reading partnerships are instrumental in creating an enriched literacy environment, which will help foster children's love for reading and learning.

Meanwhile, Fuchs (2021) said that older siblings who taught their younger siblings developed more excellent reading and language achievement than other children who did not teach their siblings.

Lost Library of Knowledge

The lack of reading materials at home presents a significant challenge to the literacy development of students. Suppose learners do not have access to books, magazines, or other forms of reading materials. In that case, they are missing out on an avenue for both the practice and the further development of reading skills outside of the classroom. This constraint not only impacts their understanding and lexical learning, but they also become less motivated and intrinsically read as well. Filling this gap highlights the imperative of providing access to a rich and engaging body of reading materials to develop a supportive literacy climate for students.

Children whose homes had few books or other reading resources did much worse on reading achievement tests than their peers whose homes were rich in books and reading materials. It also showed that the availability of reading materials in the house provided children with more opportunities to practice reading and helped develop a favorable attitude toward literacy. The authors argue that interventions designed to increase access to books and encourage reading in the home have great potential for improving literacy disparities. This research thus helps underline the importance of policies and programs in assisting families to create literacy-rich environments within under-resourced communities. Three out of seven participants had books at home. While Participants 1, 5, 6, and 7 said, respectively,

"Mayroon po akong libro kaso po yung binigay lang ni Ma'am" (I have some books, but they were given by our adviser) (Participant 1).

"Wala po akong mga libro, Ma'am sa bahay." (I don't have books at home) (Participant 5).

"Wala po kaming mga libro sa bahay, Ma'am tapos yun iba po paulit ulit naman po." (We don't have any books at home, Ma'am, others are repeated ones) (Participant 6).

"Wala po kaming mga libro sa bahay. Nagsusulat lang po si ate ko ng ipapabasa nya sa papel ng mga babasahin ko po. Tapos binabasa din po naming yung binigay ni mam Russell, yung galing po sa adviser namin." (We don't have any books at home. My sister just writes down reading materials on paper for me to read. Then, we also read the ones our adviser gave us) (Participant 7).

The answers suggest that a deficiency of reading resources existed in their families. The parents' incapacity to support their children may cause the absence of reading resources.

This could have also prevented their kids from advancing in their literacy. Being read to and having fun while reading aloud to parents is a common experience that many people can articulate. However, according to McGee and Schickedanz (2020), almost three-fifths of parents said their children were no longer read to at home. Parkes (2019) asserted that "shared reading is to provide children with an enjoyable reading experience, to introduce them to a variety of authors and illustrators...and to entice them to want to be readers themselves."

Several studies have shown that shared reading experiences are perfect for young people. They are also appreciated for fostering favorable attitudes toward reading through shared social opportunities between parents and their offspring. Furthermore, when their moms are more involved in school, boys in primary school have better reading abilities and a slower fall in their academic grades (Kingdon, Serbin, & Stack, 2020).

Struggles and Challenges in Reading Pupils Encounter

Phonetic Gap

Some pupils have difficulty recognizing or producing the correct sounds associated with letters or letter combinations. It can occur when someone has trouble matching written letters or groups of letters to their corresponding spoken sounds, often leading to mispronunciation or challenges in reading.

Participant 1 commented, *"Kaunti lang po yung alam kong tunog sa alpabeto. Alam ko naman po yung iba maliban po sa ibang letra tulad T, G."* (I only know a few sounds in the alphabet. I know most of them except T and G.)

The problems come from being exposed very little to phonemic awareness, from insufficient practice, or through language barriers.

Participant 2 added, *"Kaya ko naman po yung mga tunog maliban po sa H, P, R, T, U, W, at Z."* (I can say the different sounds of the alphabet except H, P, R, T, U, W, and Z.)

Phonemic awareness difficulties are linked to reading disabilities. Miao Li et. al (2023) found that interventions focusing on phonological awareness training effectively improved the reading performance of children with reading disabilities. Letter-sound knowledge is predictive of later literacy outcomes, reinforcing the need for direct instruction in these areas.

Participant 3 uttered, *"Nahihirapan po akong basahin yung X at Z. Kapag po nahihirapan po ako, tinutunog ko po uli para maalala ko po."* (I have a hard time reading letters X and Z. When I struggle, I sound them out again to help me remember.)

Faint grasp of content

Low reading comprehension is an everyday obstacle to learning and academic achievement. Students whose academic literacy skills are low have a hard time reading, interpreting, and analyzing written texts, so such students have academic difficulties in many

subjects. This problem not only prevents their academic development but also affects the students' confidence and passion for reading.

Improving reading comprehension necessitates specific interventions (e.g., explicit teaching techniques, activities of interest, and individual attention) so that students can develop critical literacy skills and their capacity for information processing and information retention. Comprehension relies on mastery of decoding; children who struggle to decode find it challenging to understand and remember what has been read. Because their efforts to grasp individual words are so exhausting, they have no resources left for understanding.

When asked if they could understand what they read, Participant 1 said:

"Hindi ko po naiintindihan yung binabasa ko. Nahhirapan po ako magbasa ng mga salita po at pangungusap, Madali po pag mga tunog lang. Madali po magbasa ng ABAKADA po. Kapag nasa libro po mahirap po basahin. Nahhirapan po ako sa Tagalog chaka English po." (I don't understand what I am reading. I have a hard time reading words, especially sentences. It is easy when I just say the sound like ABAKADA.

Participant 2 replied, *"Hindi ko po alam, ma'am. Wala po ako naintindihan nakakalimutan ko rin po agad."* (I don't know. I don't understand. I forget it easily.)

Participant 7 added, *"Hindi ko po naiintindihan yung binabasa ko. Yung Madali lang po basahin para sa akin ay yung Abakada po chaka po yung binigay ni Ma'am. Yung ibang babasahin naman po nahhirapan po ako kahit Tagalog lalo na po English."* (I'm having a hard time understanding what I'm reading. The only ones I find easy to read are the ones written in Abakada and the one Ma'am gave me. I struggle with other readings, even if they're in Tagalog-especially if they're in English.

The participants' responses revealed their problem with comprehension. This could be the students' worst struggle.

Leisure reading is comparable to some research that demonstrates how easy reading enhances vocabulary (Angelos & McGriff, 2022), reading comprehension (Guthrie et al., 2021), and favorable attitudes about reading (Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2023). Regrettably, the participants did not practice English and instead read novels written in Filipino. Pupils who receive little reading instruction from adults grow disinterested in reading, which can impede future efforts to read more successfully. Mitchell (2020) also studied how interacting aloud affected students' understanding. Her research indicates that reading aloud to students can improve their comprehension levels. Additionally, the study found that student dialogue and graphic organizers enhance knowledge in general.

Words feel like locked doors.

Most pupils face problems regarding basic reading skills, like decoding unfamiliar words. Such difficulties will delay the reading process and may require pupils to pause repetitively to pronounce each word carefully. This situation eventually alters their reading flow and concentration on understanding the text. This results in compromised comprehension as the energy consumed mentally is in word recognition rather than in comprehension of the context or content.

Participant 2 revealed, *“Mahirap pong sagutin yung mga tanong tungkol sa binasa ko po kasi po hindi ko naman nababasa.”* (It is hard for me to answer the questions about what I read, because I can’t really read it.)

In a study by Kirby et al. (2020), several studies have documented that repetition errors often occur due to poor working memory and processing speed. Hence, for a student deficient in these competencies, it will become hard to hold and manipulate information, making them more prone to such errors.

Participant 3 added, *“Nahirapan po akong sagutin ang mga tanong kasi po hindi ko naman po naiintindihan yung binasa ko dahil di po ako marunong magbasa”* (I am having a hard time answering questions because I did not understand what I read. I don’t know how to read yet.)

Moreover, according to Garcia and Cain (2021), the challenge of quickly recognizing words automatically is likely to result in repetition due to students' attempts to substitute their slow decoding skills. These findings are replicated in a meta-analysis by Wang and Yang (2022), which, for fluency interventions—repeated reading and guided oral reading practices—identified different parameters for effective practices that deleterious repetition errors by 75%. Moreover, speech-to-text applications and other technology-enhanced reading tools have been applied to improve the reading results of students who struggle with reading because they provide real-time feedback, which lightens the load of working memory as described in Smith & Jones (2019).

Participant 5 mentioned, *“Mahirap pong sagutin yung mga tanong kasi po hindi ko po naiintidhan yung binasa ko. Lalo na sa English”* (It is hard for me to answer the questions because I did not understand what I read, especially in English.)

Likewise, students with poor decoding skills might display less confidence in reading aloud, refrain from engaging in reading activities, and develop negative attitudes concerning reading. If left unaddressed, such reading-related problems could hinder academic progress in some subjects requiring strong literacy skills. Hence, it is implied to tackle these concerns

through phonics instruction, guided reading practices, and focused intervention programs to establish basic literacy levels and build fluency and comprehension in reading.

Themes and Their Implications for Improving Reading Outcomes	
Weakened Roots of Support (Lack of reading buddy)	Limited home guidance reduces practice in decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Strengthening home-based support, through reading buddies or parental involvement, enhances confidence, accuracy, and motivation in reading.
Lost Library of knowledge (Lack of reading materials at home)	The scarcity of reading materials restricts exposure to vocabulary, limiting reading practice. Providing accessible and diverse reading materials increases reading frequency and supports vocabulary and comprehension development.
Phonetic Gap (Difficulty with letter-sound correspondence)	Weakened phonemic awareness hinders decoding and word recognition. Targeted phonics instruction and multi-sensory activities boost letter-sound mastery.
Faint Grasp of content (Low reading comprehension)	Pupils' cognitive resources are spent on decoding rather than understanding the texts. Teaching comprehension strategies helps pupils interpret and process text more effectively.
Words feel like locked doors (Difficulty decoding and answering questions)	Poor decoding disrupts reading flow and prevents pupils from answering comprehension questions. Fluency-building interventions improve reading comprehension.

Enhancement Program

Collaborative Strategies for Literacy Development

Strategically, a reading enhancement program should be conceptualized because of critical gaps in literacy skills, parental involvement, and resource availability to build a culture of reading and academic growth. Many pupils lack fundamental literacy skills, such as phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension, and these impediments prevent their effective academic progress. In the same breath, parents are generally willing to support their children in education, but they often do not have the strategy or the tools for effectively facilitating reading development from home. Moreover, restricted access to books and other learning resources within vulnerable communities intensifies these problems and creates stairs to continuous learning outside the classroom. A

multi-faceted approach that will blend all efforts from schools, parents, and community stakeholders needs to be put in place so that these gaps can be filled.

One important suggestion is to set up a Reading Mentorship Program, which will recruit and train volunteers in one-on-one and group activities to help struggling learners with individual reading support. Such mentoring would help to build the confidence of learners, improve comprehension, and track progress. Another recommendation to meet the recommended level of accessibility is the establishment of a Mobile Library Program, which ensures that books and educational materials reach people in remote areas where learning resources are dilapidated. This could be accomplished by delivering books to the communities themselves and organizing read-aloud sessions as such to foster sustainable reading habits in pupils and enhance their access to even more diverse materials.

Participant 2 said, "*Opo, gusto ko po kasama si ate at mama pag nagbabasa po ako.*" (Yes, I want to read with my older sister and my mother.)

Participant 4 also added, "*Opo gusto ko po na kasama ko po silang magbasa para po pag nagkakamali po ako natuturuan po nila ako agad kung paano basahin nang tama.*" (Yes, I like reading with them because when I make mistake, they can quickly teach me how to read it correctly.)

Parental Workshops for reading strategies should also be organized to enable parents as co-partners in their children's literacy growth. It shall teach them techniques applicable in the real world, such as phonics teaching, storytelling ways, and creating reading-friendly environments at home. As much as they are enlisting support from their parents, it further complements learning from outside school. Further, Reading Camps and Storytelling Sessions could be organized to contribute to the wider scope of the program. Activities such as dramatizations, storytelling contests, and literacy games will make reading fun, encourage creativity, and create social connections among the learners.

Parent 1: "*Pinipili ko po yung mga kaya niyang basahin kagaya ng Abakada.*" (I choose the one he can read like the Abakada.)

The result was supported by Anoke et al. (2023), who stated that community engagement in education means getting local communities actively involved in helping and improving pupils' learning experiences. It focuses on teamwork between schools, families, businesses, non-profit organizations, and other groups to support pupils. This is important because it recognizes that education is not limited to schools and values various skills and resources the community can provide to help pupils learn and grow. Likewise, Onunka et al. (2023) mentioned that communities could contribute by offering different resources such as books, technology, funding, and facilities. Community members can also mentor pupils by guiding them, supporting them, and being role models to develop reading skills and overcome challenges in reading. Furthermore, Akindote et al. (2023) highlight that community engagement connects education to real-life situations, challenges, and opportunities, making learning more meaningful and interesting in school. Schools involve the community's diverse talents, perspectives, and resources to expose pupils to a broader

range of learning experiences, cultural insights, and career opportunities, creating a richer and more well-rounded educational environment.

The combination of all these initiatives provides a sustainable framework for overcoming literacy challenges in a well-supported learning environment. The community engagement program combines support for mentorship, access to resources, parental engagement, and exciting activities, combining these several features to foster a lifelong love for reading, improve academic performance, and equip children with skills for success later in their lives.

Motivation and Goals for Literacy Advancement

Enhancement programs should then be crafted strategically to address the gaps in literacy skills, parental involvement, and resource availability, which are essential for academic success and eventual opportunities. Many students associate reading with school achievement and have a strong inner drive to learn how to read at the top level so that they can be considered progressive students.

As Participant 1 said, *“Opo, kasi po pag marunong po ako magbasa, papasa po ako at magiging grade 5 na po ako,”* (Yes, because If I know how to read, I will pass and move on to Grade 5.)

It reflects the faith that reading proficiency has a direct bearing on the advancement and accomplishment of students in school. Most of all, it corresponds to the views of the parents regarding the importance of economic and social mobility or better opportunities in the future.

Parent 3 said, *“Opo, nais ko po siyang matutong magbasa sa Tagalog at English,”* (Yes, I want him to learn to read both Tagalog and English)

It emphasizes the importance they attach to being literate and bilingual for academic and career advancement. According to Stutzel (2019), there is a strong emphasis on examining the correlation between parental engagement and a child's reading achievement. Research has established a correlation between the level of parental engagement in developing their child's literacy abilities and the child's academic achievement. Additionally, some home-based programs performed by parents have been demonstrated, via rigorous research, to be effective. These programs must be both captivating and centered on literacy abilities. Acquiring foundational reading abilities is crucial for children even before they start kindergarten, as they may be at a disadvantage compared to their peers. Recognizing the significance of parental engagement in the early stages of a child's life and its impact on the development of literacy skills, educators across all age groups must implement this study by actively encouraging family involvement through various communication tactics.

Parent 1 declared, *“Mas okay sana na mayroon ako kasama mag basa at may available na materials sa bawat barangay”* (It would be better If I have someone to help me teach reading with my child, and if there were available reading materials in our barangay)

An enhancement program has been devised to tackle the literacy problems, propel academic enhancement, and promote learning throughout life. Among the main initiatives proposed is a Reading Mentorship Program whereby trained volunteers will provide individualized mentoring to strengthen reading confidence and motivate pupils toward achieving academic progress. Another Mobile Library will also be rolled out to facilitate access to books and learning materials, especially in underserved areas, to cultivate the culture of reading through mobile borrowing services and activities in the community.

Geske and Ozola (2020) emphasized the importance of parental involvement in the child's academic success. The family dramatically impacts a pupil's academic progress, especially in reading. Parents have an essential role in developing reading literacy. Parents' educational background is a significant driver of both reading literacy and total academic achievement in pupils. The frequency with which parents engage in reading-promoting activities is substantially related to their level of parental education. Parents' reading promotion activities during the preschool years significantly impact a student's reading proficiency by Grade 4. It is critical to emphasize that no single activity universally promotes children's reading literacy. Parents who actively participate in one activity are more likely to participate in others. Nonetheless, reading aloud and storytelling throughout preschool emerge as the most direct activities that can significantly improve a child's reading abilities.

Parent 2 expressed, *“Masyado kasi kaming busy sa work kaya dapat may katulong din kami sap ag papabasa sa anak ko lalo napag may pasok”* (We are too busy with work, so we need help with reading to our child especially when I’m working.)

Thereby, in a bid to foster parental involvement, Parental Workshops will educate them on teaching children to read, for instance, phonics and storytelling, such that they will be able to encourage reading development in the home. Apart from these, Reading Camps and Storytelling Sessions will create opportunities for experiences through competitions, dramatization, and games, all to elicit fun while reading and improving comprehension and critical-thinking skills. According to Andrum, Brakke, and McCarthy (2019), Storytelling captures students' attention and makes learning more enjoyable. It encourages active participation and immerses students in the narrative, making the learning experience memorable and engaging. Likewise, another benefit of storytelling is that it has been shown that storytelling enhances students' speaking ability because it is a low anxiety setting in which to practice speaking, as learners are more concerned about the story rather than with potential linguistic errors.

This initiative will empower pupils and parents alike to achieve the things they desire regarding academic enhancement through resources, instructions, and fun opportunities. It promotes collaboration between schools, families, and communities to ensure long-term literacy growth and future chances for success.

Linking findings to proposed reading enhancement programs
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Weakened roots of support (Lack of reading buddy)	Reading mentorship program and Parental workshop
Lost library of knowledge (Lack of reading materials at home)	Mobile library program
Phonetic gap (Difficulty with letter-sound correspondence)	Phonics instruction through reading mentorship program
Faint grasp of content (Low reading comprehension)	Reading camps and storytelling sessions
Words feel like locked doors (Difficulty decoding and answering questions)	Guided oral reading and fluency activities through reading camps

Conclusion and Recommendation

This research explored pupils' home literacy experience, accessibility of reading resources, and parental involvement. Pupils face difficulties in reading when they are unable to comprehend well, have limited vocabularies, and make incorrect statements. They spend little time reading and face word recognition problems, which hinders their progress in developing literacy skills. Specific interventions such as phonics-based approaches and guided reading programs are needed, to develop reading confidence and competency.

(This statement is not needed. You just need to state the implication of the study in the next statements.)

This research proposes specific literacy initiatives that schools, families, and stakeholders can develop together in developing the reading skills of pupils. Such programs include Volunteer Reading Tutor programs for individual attention, Mobile Libraries for transportation of books and learning materials, Teacher's Training in reading, and Parental Workshops for new home-based reading strategies. Then enjoyable, such as Reading Camps and Storytelling Sessions, can be used to make reading fun and engaging, and develop a lifelong habit of learning. All these will work to fill the literacy gaps through collaboration, accessibility, and sustainable practices in reading, thus bridging the disadvantaged learners and empowering them to succeed in academics.

Based upon the conclusions, the study's recommendations are as follows:

1. The study suggests establishing a Volunteer Reading Mentorship Program, in which teachers and barangay volunteers dedicate their time to helping frustrated readers improve their reading skills.
2. The study proposes launching a Mobile Library Program where teachers and local government units of Barangay Maligaya will provide reading materials to underserved areas.
3. The study advises the school to organize Parental Workshops to educate parents and guardians on how they can support and improve their child's reading skills at home. Parental workshops in reading provide parents with strategies, resources, and techniques to help foster a love of reading and strengthen literacy development in their children.

4. Teachers, parents, and school officials should work together to conduct Reading Camps to help children with reading difficulties improve their reading skills in a fun and engaging environment. Reading camps may focus on letter-sound recognition, word decoding, and reading comprehension.
5. This might serve as the foundation for the Department of Education's potential budget allocation for more reading materials and an investigation into the development of a livelihood program to better understand families' socioeconomic position. The study's findings may be used to design and implement a reading program that is accessible to most frustrated students. The research findings will serve as the framework for the Teacher's Training aimed at improving teachers' abilities, competencies, strategies, and approaches to increasing children's reading comprehension levels. School officials may use the study's findings as a guide to develop a program to improve pupils' reading comprehension.

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